



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Johnny L. Thomas, 18th District
Vice-Chair, Finance & Audit Committee

For Immediate Release April 15, 2010
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COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S CONTRACT WITH WACKENHUT NEGLECTS PUBLIC SAFETY

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Supervisor Johnny L. Thomas released the following statement regarding the private security firm currently providing security services for Milwaukee County facilities:

“The County Executive’s decision to privatize security services was wrong. Last month, I issued a press release questioning the outsourcing of these jobs to individuals with questionable backgrounds. Now, we’ve seen that an individual hired by Wackenhut has a history of blatant disregard for the law. While I support identifying employment opportunities as part of the corrections and rehabilitation process, it is not appropriate for this individual to manage security guards at the Courthouse Complex, Children’s Court or City Campus.

“It’s clear to me that proper background checks are either not being performed by Wackenhut or not being fully reported to Milwaukee County. We need this information. Today, I am calling on the County Executive to demand that Wackenhut provide all background information on security guards and security management staff. Clean backgrounds are a must when providing security.

“For the record, the County Board never approved the contract with Wackenhut. In fact, we voted against outsourcing security during the 2010 budget process last fall. Instead, the County Executive ignored the policy-making legislative branch and unilaterally entered into this contract. During this morning’s Finance & Audit Committee meeting, we learned that the 2010 savings from this contract will be \$125,000, 42% lower than expected. The County Executive’s initial savings estimates last year were nearly \$700,000.

“Security at the courthouse is a sensitive function. It’s important for those who visit the courthouse, including witnesses, defendants, plaintiffs, jurors, judges and attorneys. We need an adequate level of safety to protect these individuals. It’s time for the County Executive to take action and tighten up the standards for those who protect our courthouse and our citizens.”

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